

PENTOGUARD Silage Additive

David Lewis

Silage making has evolved over the years. Two changes that are the most notable are the increase of high sugar and low fibre grasses in seed mixes. Also farmers are applying more slurry in spring and between crops over summer. Whilst these are positive moves, they can lead to problems with fermentation of silages.

Even following a good silage making season such as 2013, we came across a variety of problems with unstable or lactic silages which hampered production. For good animal performance, a stable, palatable silage is essential. To improve silage stability and dry matter intake we recommend **PENTOGUARD** silage additive.

Now with two years experience of silages made with Pentoguard, we have consistently found silages that are palatable and stable with no warming at the face. They have a pH of around 4 with no reports of highly acidic lactic silages that can occur with other additives such as those based on *Lactobacillus Plantarum*.

Pentoguard has three modes of action:

- 1) Xylanase enzyme breaks down part of the undigestible fibre in grass to produce pentose sugars. The cellulose and hemicellulose fractions are not affected.
- 2) *Lactobacillus Buchneri* feeds on these sugars to produce both lactic and acetic acids. This balance of acids is more cow friendly with less chance of acidosis developing. Acetic acid also inhibits the formation of yeasts and moulds in the silage.
- 3) *Enterococcus faecium* acts to prevent the development of pathogens in the silage during fermentation and whilst feeding. Removal of any mycotoxins in silage is a big aid to animal health.

Pentoguard is not only effective for grass silages but also wholecrop and maize. It is effective for grass and maize between 20 and 45% dry matter and up to 50% dry matter for wholecrop. It meets EU regulatory requirements and is available in sachets for dilution in water and applying at 2 litres per tonne.

Ask us for a price.

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Contractors / Service

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Fencing Contractors, A and S Corner, Easingwold. Call Andrew for a competitive quote: 01347 823645.

Grassland subsoiling, aerating, ploughing, reseeding & overseeding. Harrogate / Ripon area. Steven Brown 07920 884575.

Cattle freeze-branding, North Yorkshire. Tel Steve Johnson 07940 064991 or 01347 810980.

Fencing Contractors David Robinson. Leyburn 07762 317201.

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60 bales of good quality silage and PZ haybob for sale. 01765 658316 or 07745 808489.

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100-150 tonnes of wholecrop barley. Bedale Area. Offers Tel Andrew 07753 637638

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Four wooden lamb creep feeders. 8ft. in length. Good condition. Bedale. 07742 801083.

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APRIL 2014 ISSUE

Summer cakes & blends for dairy cows

Jake Lakin

As cows go out and the grazing season is upon us it's time to look at your dairy cakes and blends. Cows will need bought-in feeds that complement grass. Grass is high in rumen nitrogen so blends and cakes need to supply rumen energy so that the rumen bugs can make microbial protein. It's a good idea to use a range of rumen energy sources, so blends and cakes should contain some sugar, starch and digestible fibre. Doing this will maximize protein supply from the rumen. Ingredients that help to provide rumen energy include soya hulls, sugar beet, wheat, barley, maize & molasses. The protein can be topped up with bypass sources such as protected rape and soya or the whole of the cake can be protected, thus meeting the demands of the early lactation cows.

Spring grass can also upset rumen stability due to its high acid load and low fibre content. Ingredients need to be selected in blends and cakes that don't make this problem worse. For example, soya hulls will help to buffer the rumen creating the right environment for the rumen bugs, thus ensuring they maximize protein manufacture. Protected fats are useful components of rations, however some work better than others. Some protected fats have dubious rumen protection which means more of the fat ends up in the rumen coating the fibres leading to less efficient bugs. This in turn can depress milk fat. Some starch is needed in the diet to provide energy but this can be fizzy in the rumen, however rolled maize and protected cereals provide bypass starch which is gentler on the rumen.

Ask your rep or ring the office about a summer cake or blend designed for you.



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Lambing EASE

Jonathan Hall farms in partnership with his mother and father and they all work together on the farm in Cleveland. This year, the family lambed 200 ewes, 150 mules and 50 texel cross, put to beltex cross texel tups.

The continental ewes lambed in February and were scanned at 185% and the mules lambed in March and scanned at 210%. In previous years Jonathan has fed Ewedale gold pencils and this year he decided to upgrade to Ewedale EASE. According to Jonathan this year lambs have been born stronger and have hit the ground running. As well as lambs being very vigorous, ewes have had better mothering ability as they have been more vocal. Jonathan says that even ewes that had not done so well over winter and had low body condition are doing very well and their lambs are doing well too. Intake of concentrates was good even after lambing. Jonathan says that lamb survival has been improved due to stronger lambs being born and ewes looking after them better. After lambing, Jonathan says ewes had thick, yellow colostrum and plenty of it. Because of the better start in life lambs have had a high growth rate and are doing well. Jonathan says he thinks ewe health has improved too. It will be interesting to see if there is less of a parasite burden on the ewes this spring due to the increase in bypass protein in the cake. Also, it is hoped that these early gains carry through to the finished lambs.

Ask us for more information on our Ewedale EASE.



Intensive lamb creep Graham Jameson

Greater efficiency and lamb weight gains occur if lambs are creep fed than if only the ewes are concentrate fed. For rapid weight gains, creep diets need to be palatable, high in energy and must contain adequate protein, minerals and vitamins. Rumen development is stimulated by intake of solid feed. Hence, creep fed lambs will do better at weaning than those that have relied on just their mothers' milk.



To achieve high performance and encourage rumen growth, lambs should receive a diet that ferments rapidly and does not lead to an accumulation of indigestible fibrous material in the rumen resulting in pot-bellied lambs.

This can be avoided by feeding Intensive lamb creep as only high quality ingredients are included.

According to current research, creep feeding during the first 12 weeks of life will cost half as much as feeding a lamb in September to achieve compensatory growth lost earlier in the season. When creep feeding has to be introduced as an emergency measure to try and salvage poor growth rates during the first three weeks of a lamb's life, it will not achieve the same benefit that would have been gained if it had been offered earlier when feed conversion ratios are twice as high as later on in their lives.

Farmers should also consider the quantity and quality of grass available to ewes & lambs after lambing. If you've got a grass gap during the early stage of lactation, the lamb growth lost will never be recovered without supplementary feeding. Creep feeding can be used either as a vital support to growth from a very early age to about seven weeks and then withdrawn, or can be used right up to slaughter. There's no way that a ewe suckling twins can supply all their nutritional requirements beyond two weeks. So these twin lambs need to be getting into creep feed before three weeks old.

Ask us about Intensive lamb creep.

Keeping up to speed Dr Ruth Lawson

We thought it was about time we brought you up to date with the weird and wonderful research going on around the world, this month we consider if mandatory electronic identification (EID) of sheep is simply a burden on farmers, or could it be turned into an opportunity. Researchers at SAC managed a sheep flock conventionally and the other with a precision livestock farming (PLF) management protocol. One of the PLF approaches was the targeted selective treatment (TST) for worming lambs.

Traditional worming strategies can become ineffective, leading to severe problems with anthelmintic resistance and poor growth performance of lambs. The use of an anthelmintic wormer to treat against a mixed population of worms that are resistant and non-resistant to the drug just leads to the resistant worms taking over. Lambs become infected with greater and greater numbers of worms for which the treatment does not work. Therefore, the new strategy from SAC entails only worming the lambs that do not thrive and need treatment, thus retaining anthelmintic-susceptible worms in the wider parasite population and slowing the development of resistance. In order to be able to identify the individuals that require worming, lambs need to be weighed regularly.

Expected (targeted) growth rate for each individual lamb was calculated by the researchers, which was then compared to their actual growth rate and underperforming lambs were selectively wormed. The overall amount of wormer used was reduced by ~30% in this first year.

The researchers say that this approach should be considered in the light of the growing problem of anthelmintic resistance in sheep flocks, with all the associated negative impacts on farm economics, animal welfare and lamb meat and carcass quality.

Clearly there is potential for further uses of EID in the future for example recording of lambing data so that culling decisions are easy and quick to make. Also, veterinary medicine information could be recorded saving time.



Patching up Peter Harland

Compared with some areas of the country we have got off lightly this winter in terms of rainfall and flooding. However, we have still had a lot of rainfall, luckily the recent drier and windy weather has helped to dry off a lot of areas, but damage has been done especially by livestock on wet pastures.

In some cases a full re-seed will be necessary, due to the damage caused by wintering livestock, and this should be taken as an opportunity to turn a mediocre ley, into a top quality, high production pasture, which is going to produce you more, better quality, lower cost forage. Simple steps can be carried out such as, correcting drainage issues, checking soil nutrient status, and soil pH and also examining the soil structure. An informed decision can then be made such as, can you just power harrow the surface soils to create a seed bed, or do you need to plough, to lighten up the soil structure and correct compaction issues.

Some swards will not need reseeding, even though, they have been poached, and are a little open, you might feel that they will recover. As a rough guide, to do this, you really need at least one healthy perennial ryegrass plant in every 4 inch square of the field, if the field is to recover well. If you have less than this then weeds such as annual meadow grass, and docks, will invade the bare patch using up your fertilizer, competing with your grasses and lowering yield and quality.

We can supply you with reseeding advice as well as premium quality seed mixtures to suite all uses, and at relatively short notice. We are very proud that the varieties of grass seed we use in our mixtures are NIAB certified, and come with scientifically backed up performance data. Furthermore the purity of our seed and the high germination test ensure that a Jameson ley will get your pastures off to the best possible start.

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